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Ban technology sales to Soviets: senator

WASHINGTON (AP)—The Reagan administration's "confusion and foot-dragging" are allowing the Soviet Union to use American know-how to build its own strength, Sen. Henry M. Jackson (D., Wash.) charged Thursday.

In a speech to the Senate, Jackson called on the administration to prohibit immediately the use of any American

technology to help build a natural gas pipeline from Siberia to Western Europe.

"There is no longer doubt that our technology has materially aided Soviet expansion," Jackson said. "It has improved Soviet weapons, intelligence devices, and economic leverage. We are still much too far away from a vigorous program to effectively meet the danger."

Jackson specifically cited the administration's handling of the proposed natural gas pipeline.

HE SAID HE wrote then President-elect Reagan 10 days after the 1980 election, urging him to reassess the government's presumption in favor of granting licenses for the export of oil and gas equipment.

"Yet the administration started off by approving a first shipment of Caterpillar pipelayers to the Soviet Union," he said.

He said that at the 1981 economic summit in Ottawa, Reagan "made known U.S. concerns with the West Siberian pipeline, but the administration didn't get itself together for an effective follow-up."

"It took the crackdown in Poland to energize the government," Jackson said. "And even now high officials are talking about the decision regarding U.S. technology and the pipeline in terms of 'weighing the damage to the Soviet Union against the damage to the alliance.'"

"What accounts for the confusion and the foot-dragging?" Jackson asked.

HE SAID THE administration had made a "fragmentary start" toward a more restrictive policy in recent months, but he added: "I am worried that our recent efforts will not outlast the current sanctions resulting from events in Poland."

"Technology transfers involve vital

long-term issues of our national security, and they should not be turned on and off for foreign policy considerations of the moment."

As examples, Jackson told the Senate that bearing grinders licensed for sale to the Soviet Union had "contributed greatly to Soviet military programs" and that a supposed truck plant supported by American technology manufactured missile launchers.

In spite of this, he said, "Requests for U.S. export licenses are still processed under a system that is biased against protecting national security."

JACKSON REJECTED the argument that sales of U.S. technology to the Soviets should be permitted because Moscow would obtain the items elsewhere in any event.

"Logic like this would have parents supplying heroin to their children," he said.

On the other hand, he said, "a punitive unilateral approach . . . risks creating a system of penalties that would have the effect of driving high-technology firms abroad."